



Year 37 No. 2

16th Sunday in Ordinary Time (A) — Green
World Day of Grandparents and the Elderly

July 23, 2023



THE LORD Does Not GIVE UP ON US

by Fr. Jose S. Aripio, SSP

A parishioner of mine, named Esperanza, once told me that she has two sons. When they were young, the younger one was so naughty, stubborn, and hard-headed. He would go to school with only a notebook in his pocket and would hardly study at home. He would even pick fights with the boys in the neighborhood.

Esperanza can now look back with surprise and gratitude because this son would turn out to be a true revelation—a successful businessman and a loving husband and father. Esperanza had never given up on him, never compared him to his better-behaved older brother. She loved and accepted him for who he was.

Today's Gospel parable of the wheat and the weeds tells us about the goodness and patience of the Lord, and his desire to give us chances to reform. It reminds us that God is the source of all good things. He sows only good seeds and

is never the source of evil.

This parable was directed to Jesus' disciples, not to outsiders like the religious leaders who were antagonistic to Jesus. As such it had something to say to the Christian community for whom Matthew wrote the Gospel. The community was painfully aware of the presence of members who would scandalize others by their un-Christian behavior. How could it be that in the community cleansed by Christ's precious blood, there were manifestations of sins and scandal? How should believers treat their erring members?

Jesus' parable is a reminder that in the community of the Lord, light and shadow, goodness and evil, interplay. Imperfections and sins are to be expected. But the solution is not to separate good from evil, much less to uproot the evil ones. As weeds are indistinguishable from wheat in the early stage, it is

impossible for human beings to judge rightly the true state of the human person in his heart of hearts. Otherwise the warning of the master will come true: "If you pull up the weeds, you might uproot the wheat along with them."

Jesus does not give up on people because of their faults and sins. For Jesus, the sinner always has a future. People can change for the better. While the weeds cannot become wheat in the literal sense, in the spiritual order the evil person can become good. Good things can come out of the bad.

The parable warns us about judging others. It is the Lord who alone can judge rightly, and he judges in his own time. We will do well to heed the advice of the apostle Paul: "Do not make judgment before the appointed time, until the Lord comes, for he will bring to light what is hidden in darkness and will manifest the motives of our hearts" (1 Cor 4:5).

INTRODUCTORY RITES

Entrance Antiphon

(Ps 54 [53]:6, 8)

(Recited when there is no opening song.)

**See, I have God for my help.
The Lord sustains my soul.
I will sacrifice to you with
willing heart, and praise your
name, O Lord, for it is good.**

Greeting

(The sign of the cross is made here.)

P—The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

All—And with your spirit.

Introduction

(These [or similar words] may be used to address the assembly.)

P—Today's Gospel parable of the Weeds among the Wheat gives us an explanation of faith: God sows only good seed; evil comes from the hearts of men and women who choose not to obey him. Still, God patiently waits for the harvest, bearing with slow growth and making room for repentance.

Let us ask for the gift to be patient with one another's faults and to heed God's call for a change of heart.

Penitential Rite

P—Brethren (brothers and sisters), let us acknowledge our sins, and so prepare ourselves to celebrate the sacred mysteries. *(Pause)*

P—You were sent to heal the contrite of heart: Lord, have mercy.

All—Lord, have mercy.

P—You came to call sinners: Christ, have mercy.

All—Christ, have mercy.

P—You are seated at the right hand of the Father to intercede for us: Lord, have mercy.

All—Lord, have mercy.

P—May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and bring us to everlasting life.

All—Amen.

Gloria

All—Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to people of good will. We praise you, we bless you, we adore you, we glorify you, we give you thanks for your great glory, Lord God, heavenly King, O God, almighty Father. Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son, Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us; you take away the sins of the world, receive our prayer; you are seated at the right hand of the Father, have mercy on us. For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord, you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

Collect

P—Let us pray. *(Pause)*

Show favor, O Lord, to your servants and mercifully increase the gifts of your grace, that, made fervent in hope, faith and charity, they may be ever watchful in keeping your commands.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever.

All—Amen.



First Reading (Wis 12:13, 16-19) *(Sit)*

Salvation history is a testimony of God's merciful and enduring love. Meditating on God's patience and mercy, we in turn must be kind to one another.

A reading from the Book of Wisdom

THERE is no god besides you who have the care of all, that you need show you have not unjustly condemned. For your might is the source of justice; your mastery over all things

makes you lenient to all. For you show your might when the perfection of your power is disbelieved; and in those who know you, you rebuke temerity. But though you are master of might, you judge with clemency, and with much leniency you govern us; for power, whenever you will, attends you. And you taught your people, by these deeds, that those who are just must be kind; and you gave your children good ground for hope that you would permit repentance for their sins.

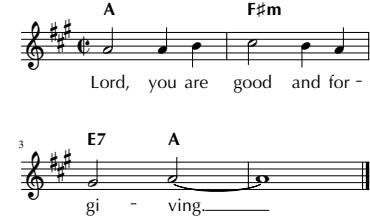
—The word of the Lord.

All—Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm (Ps 86)

R—Lord, you are good and forgiving.

Sr. M.C.A Parco, fsp



1. You, O LORD, are good and forgiving,/ abounding in kindness to all who call upon you./ Hearken, O LORD, to my prayer/ and attend to the sound of my pleading. **(R)**

2. All the nations you have made shall come/ and worship you, O LORD,/ and glorify your name./ For you are great, and you do wondrous deeds;/ you alone are God. **(R)**

3. You, O LORD, are a God merciful and gracious,/ slow to anger, abounding in kindness and fidelity./ Turn toward me, and have pity on me; give your strength to your servant. **(R)**

Second Reading (Rom 8:26-27)

We struggle with imperfection, even in prayer, but God is patiently at work in us through the Holy Spirit who helps us in our weakness.

A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Romans

BROTHERS AND SISTERS: The Spirit comes to the aid of our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes with inexpressible groanings. And the one who searches hearts knows what is the intention of the Spirit, because he intercedes for the holy ones according to God's will.

—The word of the Lord.
All—**Thanks be to God.**

Alleluia (Cf. Mt 11:25) (Stand)

All—**Alleluia, alleluia. Blessed are you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth; you have revealed to little ones the mysteries of the kingdom. Alleluia, alleluia.**

Gospel (Mt 13:24-30) (Shortform)

P—A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew
All—**Glory to you, O Lord.**

JESUS PROPOSED another parable to the crowds, saying: "The kingdom of heaven may be likened to a man who sowed good seed in his field. While everyone was asleep his enemy came and sowed weeds all through the wheat, and then went off. When the crop grew and bore fruit, the weeds appeared as well. The slaves of the householder came to him and said, 'Master, did you not sow good seed in your field? Where have the weeds come from?' He answered, 'An enemy has done this.' His slaves said to him, 'Do you want us to go and pull them up?' He replied, 'No, if you pull up the weeds you might uproot the wheat along with them. Let them grow together until harvest; then at harvest time I will say to the harvesters, "First collect the weeds and tie them in bundles for burning; but gather the wheat into my barn."'"

—The Gospel of the Lord.
All—**Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

Homily (Sit)

Profession of Faith (Stand)

All—I believe in one God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible.

I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God, born of the Father before all ages. God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father; through him all things were made. For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven, (At the words that follow up to and including and became man, all bow.) and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate, he suffered death and was buried, and rose again on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead and his kingdom will have no end.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets.

I believe in one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church. I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Prayer of the Faithful

P—God has sown his Word in our hearts so that we may grow fruitful in our Christian discipleship. With confidence, let us call out to the Father:

R—Father, perfect us in your love.

C—May the Church become more fully conscious of her mission as evangelizer of the

Word so that people may be led to renewal and conversion. We pray: (R)

C—May government leaders reject the culture of death and revenge by tempering their sense of justice with mercy and compassion. We pray: (R)

C—May family members nourish themselves with daily meditation on your Word and constant acts of charity. We pray: (R)

C—May our beloved dead see the light of your eternal embrace and be given sure hope of the resurrection. We pray: (R)

C—Let us pray for the urgent concerns of our community and our personal intentions (pause). We pray: (R)

P—Perfect us in your love, almighty Father, and help us in our weakness. Send your Spirit to strengthen us in our struggle against evil. You who live and reign for ever and ever. All—Amen.

THE LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST



Presentation of the Gifts (Stand)

**P—Pray, brethren...
All—May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands for the praise and glory of his name, for our good and the good of all his holy Church.**

Prayer over the Offerings

P—O God, who in the one perfect sacrifice brought to completion varied offerings of the law, accept, we pray, this sacrifice from your faithful servants and make it holy, as you blessed the gifts of Abel, so that what each has offered to the honor of your majesty may benefit the salvation of all.

Through Christ our Lord.
All—**Amen.**

Preface (Ordinary Time VI)

**P—The Lord be with you.
All—And with your spirit.**

P—Lift up your hearts.
All—We lift them up to the Lord.

P—Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
All—It is right and just.

P—It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation, always and everywhere to give you thanks, Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God.

For in you we live and move and have our being, and while in this body we not only experience the daily effects of your care, but even now possess the pledge of life eternal.

For, having received the first fruits of the Spirit, through whom you raised up Jesus from the dead, we hope for an everlasting share in the Paschal Mystery.

And so, with all the Angels, we praise you, as in joyful celebration we acclaim:

All—Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of hosts. Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest. (Kneel)

Acclamation (Stand)

All—When we eat this Bread and drink this Cup, we proclaim your Death, O Lord, until you come again.

THE COMMUNION RITE

The Lord's Prayer

All—Our Father...

P—Deliver us, Lord...

All—For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours now and for ever.

Invitation to Peace

Invitation to Communion (Kneel)

P—Behold the Lamb of God, behold him who takes away the sins of the world. Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

All—Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under

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my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.

Communion Antiphon
(Ps 111 [110]:4-5)

The Lord, the gracious, the merciful, has made a memorial of his wonders; he gives food to those who fear him.

Prayer after Communion
(Stand)

P—Let us pray. (Pause)

Graciously be present to your people, we pray, O Lord, and lead those you have imbued with heavenly mysteries to pass from former ways to newness of life.

Through Christ our Lord.
All—Amen.

THE CONCLUDING RITES

P—The Lord be with you.

All—And with your spirit.

Prayer over the People

P—Bow down for the blessing.
(Pause)

May the God of all consolation order your days in his peace and grant you the gifts of his blessing.

All—Amen.

P—May he free you always from every distress and confirm

your hearts in his love.

All—Amen.

P—So that on this life's journey you may be effective in good works, rich in the gifts of hope, faith and charity, and may come happily to eternal life.
All—Amen.

P—And may the blessing of almighty God, the Father, and the Son, (†) and the Holy Spirit, come down on you and remain with you for ever.
All—Amen.

Dismissal

P—The Mass has been offered. Go in the peace of Christ.
All—Thanks be to God.

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